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## CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

## EARLY EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE.

A LITERARY treasure of no common value, and of most singular rarity, which is likely to excite a strong interest in the minds of all well read lovers of the ancient English Drama, and will awaken the hopes and fears of every ambitious and jealous collector of scarce books, has, within the last few days, been brought to light, and is now in the hands of Messrs. Payne and Foss, of Pall Mall, London.

This exhumated curiosity is a book in small quarto, said to have been once possessed by Sir Thomas Hanmer, but not alluded to by him—containing the scarce editions of twelve of Shakespeare's Plays.—They are—

1. The Merchant of Venice.—1600.
2. The Merry Wives of Windsor.—1602.
3. Much Adoe about Nothing.—1600.
4. A Midsummer Nights Dreame.—1600.
5. Troylus & Cressida.—1609.
6. Romeo & Juliet.—1599.
7. Hamlet, 1603.
8. Henry IV. Part II.—1600.
9. ——— Part I.—1598.
10. Henry V.—1602.
11. Richard III.—1602.
12. The Two Noble Kinsmen.—1634.

The size of this important and curious volume is the ancient small quarto, and is upon the whole in good order. It was the property of Sir T. Hanmer, but must have been purchased by him after he had published his Shakespeare; otherwise he would have made use of it in that publication. From Sir T. Hanmer it passed into the possession of the Bunbury family; and it was from one of the branches of it that it

came in to the hands of the owners, Messrs. Payne & Foss.

The most interesting of these Plays is HAMLET. The following is the title:—

"The Tragical Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmark, by William Shakespeare. As it has been diuerse times actid by his Highnesse Seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford and elsewhere.—At London, printed for N. L. and John Trundell, 1603.

The edition of the Play is singular in many respects. There are various new readings, of infinite interest; sentiments expressed, which greatly alter several of the characters; differences in the names; and many minor points which are extremely curious. For example, every alternate page is headed Tragedie and Tragedy; Laertes is Laertes, throughout; Polonius is Corambis; Gildenstern is Gilderstone; Osrick has no name, but is styled a Braggart Gentleman of the Court; and in the closet scene "*the Ghost enters in his night-gown.*" The common copy of Hamlet is taken from the edition of 1604; and it is surmised that in the course of its immense popularity some piratical bookseller obtained a garbled copy and published it; for at this period copyrights were not sold by authors as in our days, and Shakespeare seems never to have paid much attention to literary profit, or to any fame beyond the walls of the theatre where his productions were performed. Various circumstances indeed confirm the suspicion, that the play was picked out by hearing it performed, and getting speeches and parts from some of the actors.

## METEOROLOGICAL REGISTER, FOR BELFAST,

From the 1st to the 28th January inclusive.—The Observations are taken each day at two o'clock.

1825.	Barom.	Therm.	Wind.	Weather.	1825.	Barom.	Therm.	Wind.	Weather.
Jan. 1	29.84	45	S. W.	Rainy.	Jan. 15	29.94	48	S. W.	Rainy a. noon.
2	00.00	00	S. W.	Heavy showers	16	29.47	45	N. W.	Rainy morn.
3	29.95	48	W. by S.	Slight rain.	17	29.82	42	S. W.	R. & high wind
4	30.31	43	S. by E.	Fine frosty nt.	18	29.09	40	S. W.	Rainy evening.
5	30.64	37	S. by E.	Frosty.	19	29.51	39	N. W.	Heavy showers
6	30.53	45	S. W.	Slight rain.	20	29.95	40	N.	Fine.
7	30.64	48	N. W.	Very fine.	21	30.12	40	N. E.	Fine frosty nt.
8	30.97	47	N. W.	Very fine.	22	30.33	39	N. E.	Very fine, frosty
9	31.09*	46	N.	Very fine.	23	30.36	36	S. W.	Very fine.
10	31.02	42	S. W.	Very fine.	24	29.75	38	S. W.	Lowering.
11	30.88	45	S. W.	Very fine.	25	29.69	38	S. W.	Frost, thawat. n.
12	30.72	35	S. W.	Very fine.	26	29.67	44	S. W.	Rainy.
13	30.46	42	S. W.	Gloomy, slt. r.	27	29.83	49	S. W.	Showery.
14	30.24	46	S. W.	Overcast.	28	30.72	43	S. W.	Very fine.